



*Office of Public Affairs
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FIJI: MILITARY ACTION AGAINST GOVERNMENT

Echoing statements made by US officials in Washington and Suva, US Ambassador to New Zealand Bill McCormick has condemned the attempted overthrow of Fiji's democratically-elected government by Commodore Bainimarama.

Prime Minister Qarase has refused to resign and the President, the Vice President, the Great Council of Chiefs have all rejected this unlawful action.

"We call on Commodore Bainimarama and the Fijian military to immediately end this provocation and allow Prime Minister Qarase and his democratically elected government to perform their duties without interference," said Ambassador McCormick.

"As a result of Commodore Bainimarama's action the United States has decided now to suspend assistance to the government of Fiji pending the outcome of ongoing events in that country. As events in Fiji unfold, we will conduct a review of those assistance programs and other available policy options," said the Ambassador.

We also will be reviewing the U.S. nonimmigrant visas of Commodore Bainimarama and other senior military officers seeking to depose the government.

"As we develop our response, we will continue to consult closely with our key international partners, including New Zealand and Australia," the Ambassador added.